(b) whether all of them are entitled to get special pay; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons for discrimination in the same category of officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) 593 (Five hundred ninety three).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Only officers performing the duties of higher responsibilities and of specially arduous nature are granted special pay.

**Review of Indian Post Office Act, 1898**

1867. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to review Indian Post Office Act, 1898; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Need for changes in the Act has arisen in the context of emerging trends in communication by mail in the country and other socio-economic factors. A Committee was set up by the Government for this purpose and the report of the Committee has been received by the Government.

**Time taken by Government to make telephone operational after Installation**

1868. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI N.E. BALARAM:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the time being taken by Government to make the telephone operational after installing the instrument for a new connection;

(b) whether Government are aware that in most of the cases it takes days and weeks together to make the telephone operational;

(c) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to a news item under "Aisa Bhi Hota Hai" published in "Nav Bharat Times" of 1st July, 1993; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government in this connection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) Sir, When a large number of connections are released due to an expansion of an exchange, to avoid delay, advance action is taken to fit the Subscribers instruments and keep them tested in anticipation of the commissioning of the exchange. It is possible that in such cases, depending upon the number of lines being released, there is delay between the fitting of the instrument and its energisation. However, the Subscribers are always advised about the likely delay in the commissioning of the exchange.

(c) and (d) No Sir. The New Delhi edition of Nav Bharat Times of 1-7-93 does not contain a news item on telephone service under such a heading.

**Large switches to be supplied by Multinational Companies**

1869. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Telecommunication department has shortlisted a few multinationals for supplying large switches; and

(b) if so, what are the names of these companies and details of the orders to be placed with each of these five companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) As per bid issued by DOT a few suppliers registered for manufacture of switching equipment in India and who had obtained clearance from the RBI and validated their systems have been considered for supply of more than 5 lakhs lines of switching equipment.

(b) In the above mentioned tender which was open to the Indian registered companies for supply of digital local telephone exchanges few companies, viz., M/s Sei-